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# MEMOIRS

— OF —

**Major Thomas Merritt, U. E. L.  
(1759-1842)**



**Cornet in Queen's Rangers, (1776-1803)  
under Col. John Graves Simcoe;**

**Major Commandant, Niagara Light Dragoons,  
in the War of 1812-14 :**

**Surveyor of Woods and Forests ;**

**and**

**Sheriff of the Niagara District for about  
twenty years.**

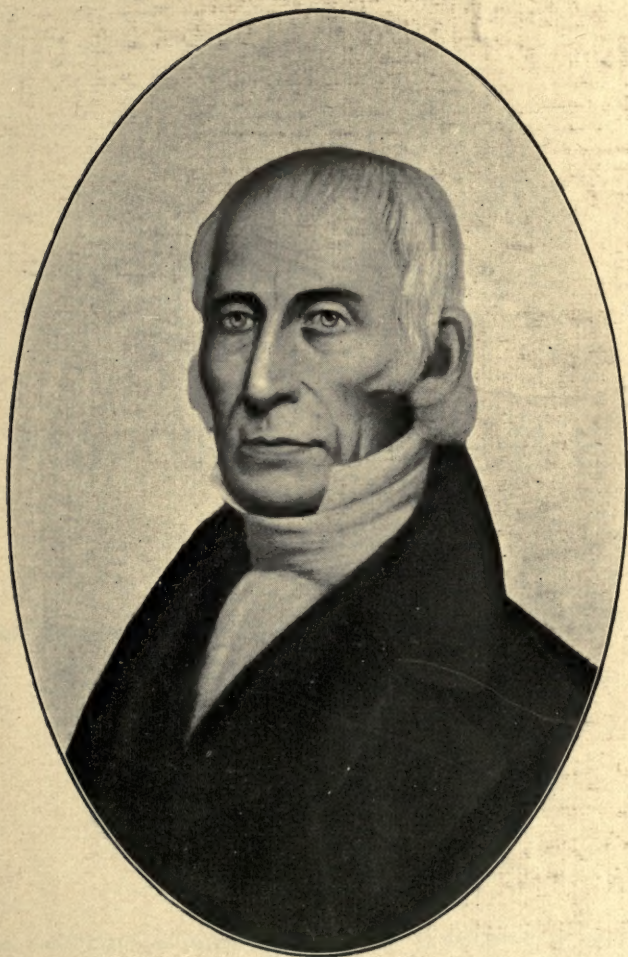
by  
William Hamilton Merritt

1855-1878

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THOMAS MERRITT,  
Major Commandant Niagara Light Dragoons.  
(Gazetted Major of Cavalry in the Militia, Dated York, 24th April, 1812.  
Previously Cornet in the Queen's Rangers 1776-1803.)





# MEMOIRS

—OF—

Major Thomas Merritt, U. E. L.

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Read before the Association on November 11th, 1909, by  
Col. Wm. Hamilton Merritt, of Toronto.

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This contribution might properly be considered a continuation of one entitled "Birthplace and Antecedents of Major Thomas Merritt, U. E. L.," by my sister, Miss Catherine Nina Merritt, of Toronto, which is to be found printed in the transactions of this Association for the year 1899-1900.

The information given below is taken from an old document entitled, "Memoirs of Thomas Merritt, Esquire, of St. Catharines, C. W." This document was evidently written by Mr. George Coventry (an Old Country "litterateur," who lived in St. Catharines), chiefly as dictated

to him by my grandfather, Captain the Honorable Wm. Hamilton Merritt, also of St. Catharines, son of the subject of this paper. As there is a good deal of reiteration I shall cut out parts of the "Memoirs," as they stand, but the following is, unless where stated, taken practically verbatim from them, and is the statement of my grandfather. Where, therefore, "father" or "grandfather," etc., occur, it means his father, grandfather, etc.



*George Coventry, Esq.—Old-time Litterateur.*

## MEMOIRS

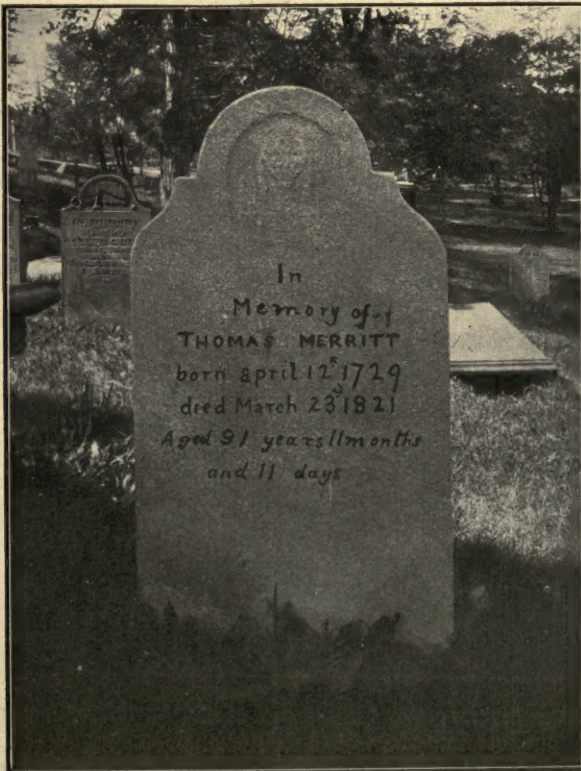
There is a tradition in our family that we are of French descent, springing from the Marriottes of Normandy, which name was corrupted into Merritt by some of them emigrating to England.

My grandfather, Thomas Merritt, was brought up on the paternal farm between Bedford and Long Island. He lived on King Street, Long Island Sound, the boundary between Connecticut and New York, on property given to his ancestors as part pay for surveying the County of West Chester; money at that time being extremely scarce. The homestead was called "Mile Square." He was born April 24th, 1736, and was the eldest of seven sons, who were dispersed in various directions. They were left orphans at an early age, so that the care of the family devolved upon him. He was married in early life, 1758, at the age of 22, to Amy Purdy, daughter of Captain Purdy, who figured in the



French War, and located in the same neighborhood. The result of this marriage was seven children, all boys but one (Phoebe Lyons). He held a Captain's commission during the commencement of the troubles, and, owing to his firm allegiance to the British Crown, would not join the rebel party or act with them. For this determination he met with a great deal of ill treatment from some of his neighbors and, ultimately, after the battle of Lexington, April 19th, 1775, he was arrested by the Whigs of West Chester and put into jail. To such a pitch of enthusiasm were things carried that even one of his relations voted with the mob to take away his life, but he was rescued and escaped to New York, which the British still held. He was accompanied by two of his sons, Thomas, my father, and Shubal. Here he obtained a Cornetcy of Dragoons for my father in the Queen's Rangers. Shubal, my uncle, was a staunch Tory and joined the Cow Boys.

My grandmother at this restless period was harassed by visits from both parties. She destroyed the family register to prevent her remaining sons from being enlisted. She did not long survive these accumulated trials and died shortly after, being buried on the family property.



*Headstone of the Father of Major Thos. Merritt in the Old Grave-yard in St John, N. B.*



My grandfather, having had his property confiscated, sailed with his family and a large number of others to New Brunswick and settled in St. John, 1783, where he died on the 23rd of March, 1821, at the great age of nearly 92 years (born 12th April, 1729), and his headstone still exists in the old burying ground on King St. East, St. John, N. B., now used as a public park.

My uncle, Shubal, who was a brave, powerful, determined character, took advantage of the permission to the Loyalists to return to their homes on the proclamation of peace. The Whig rebel party stood in awe of him. The loose, idle fellows feared him and gave him a bad name. If a man were found dead it was Merritt's doing. If another were taken prisoner it was all owing to Shubal. At length these lawless fellows determined to rid the country of one who was considered an enemy to liberty, and in the way of their unlawful proceedings. They at length waylaid him and shot him.\*

\*(One Kniffin is said to have done the shooting.)

My Uncle Nehemiah died at Saint John, New Brunswick, 1842, a strict U. E. Loyalist, leaving descendants who erected a tombstone with the following inscription:— "To the memory of Nehemiah Merritt, a native of New York. At an early age he left that country to retain unsullied his allegiance to his Sovereign and accompanied the Loyalists, who, in 1783, landed in this province, where, by an unwearied course of industry, prudence and honesty he acquired the respect and esteem of the community. He was for several years one of Her Majesty's Justice of the Peace for the city and county of Saint John's. This stone is erected by his children as a testimony of esteem."



*The Merritt plot in the Old Grave yard, on King St. E., St. John, N.B.  
—Now a public park.*

My late father, Thomas Merritt, ex-Sheriff of this district, was born at the family homestead, Mile Square, West Chester County, 28th October, 1759.



He was educated at Harvard College for a physician. When the troubles commenced our family, being strict Loyalists, turned their attention to the army, and my grandfather obtained for him a Cornetcy in Colonel Simcoe's regiment of dragoons—he was then very young, brave and aspiring. To show his zeal for the cause we find him very highly spoken of in Simcoe's Military Journal.

#### Extracts from Col. Simcoe's Military Journal.

"In the latter part of February, 1781, Cornet Merritt was ordered with a reconnoitering party, consisting of 1 sergeant and 10 dragoons, to convey some negroes, who were sent to the neighboring plantations, to search for and bring in some cattle that had escaped from us.

"From his great zeal to accomplish this service he went rather further than was intended, when he unexpectedly fell in with a corps of rebels, much superior, both in the number and goodness of their horses. He retreated in good order for some distance, but finding himself much harassed from the fire of his adversaries, and seeing that it would be impracticable to get off without giving them a check, he determined on charging them, which he did several times and with such vigor that he always repulsed them.

"He thus alternately charged and retreated, until having had two horses killed under him, he was so stunned by the fall that he was left for dead.

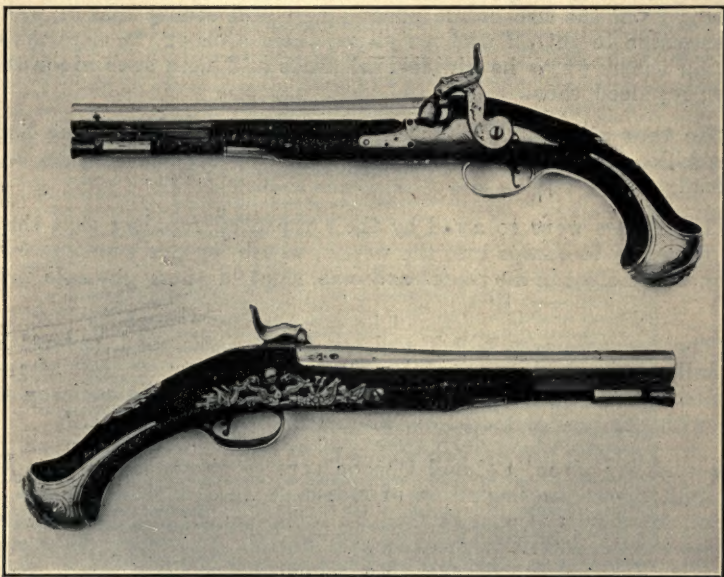
"The rebels were so awed by their repeated repulses that they suffered his party to escape into the woods, where, by dismounting and concealing themselves in the thick Savannas, most of them got safe into the Post.

"The Sergeant was killed, and 4 men were wounded, several horses were killed. Merritt being supposed to be dead, was left, but afterwards recovered his senses and was fortunate enough to find his way to the Post, with the loss of his boots, helmet and accoutrements."

In another place, Colonel Simcoe says:— "Cornet Merritt, having been sent, about the beginning of March, with a flag, to carry a letter to Genl. Marion, by order of Col. Balfour, was detained a prisoner, to retaliate for the detention of one Capt. Postell, who, after the surrender of Charles Town, had taken a protection and the Oath to us, and had, notwithstanding, again taken up arms, and had the impudence to come to George-Town, with a flag of truce, where I detained him. They crammed Merritt, with about twenty others, sergeants and privates of different British regiments, in a small, nasty, dark place, made of logs, called a bull-pen; but he was not here long before he determined to extricate himself and his fellow prisoners, which he thus effected. After having communicated his intention to them, and found them ready to support him, he pitched upon the strongest and most daring soldier, and having waited some days for a favorable opportunity, he observed that his guard (Militia) were much alarmed, which he found was occasioned by a party of British having come into that neighborhood. He then ordered th's



soldier to seize the sentry, who was posted at a small square hole cut through the logs, and which simple expedient served the double purpose of door and window, which he instantly executed, drawing the astonished sentry to this hole with one hand, and threatening to cut his throat with a large knife which he held in the other, if he made the smallest resistance, or outcry; then Cornet Merritt, and the whole party, crawled out, the one after the other, undiscovered by the guard, though it was in the daytime, until the whole had got out. He then drew them up, which the officer of the guard observing, got his men under arms as fast as he could, and threatened to fire on them if they attempted to go off: Merritt replied, that if he dared to fire a single shot at him, that he would cut the whole of his guard to pieces (having concerted with his men in such a case, to rush upon the enemy and tear their arms out of their hands) which so intimidated him, that although Merritt's party was armed only with the spoils of the sentry and with clubs, he yet permitted them to march off, unmolested, to a river at some distance, where Cornet Merritt knew, from conversation which he had with the sentries, that there was



*Pair of pistols used by Major Thos. Merritt in Wars 1776-83 and 1812-14. Converted from flint-locks in 1837 by Col. Elias Adams, who married a daughter of Major Merritt. Now in the Canadian Military Institute among the "Merritt Loan Collection."*

a large rice-boat, in which he embarked and brought his party through a country of above fifty miles safe into George Town.\* To you the undaunted spirit and bravery of this young man is not unknown; they obtained for him in his distress your friendship and protection." "Col. Balfour was pleased to approve his conduct, and in a letter to me, dated Charles Town, 2nd April, 1781, expresses it then:— 'I rejoice most sin-

\* (Now a suburb of Washington, D.C.)



cerely that your Cornet has escaped, his conduct and resolution does him a great credit, and I wish I had it in my power to show him my sense of it by more substantial mark than this testimony, but the only mode I have is by offering him a Lieutenancy of a provincial troop.' This Cornet Merritt declined.

"I shall conclude this detail with mentioning one more instance of the gallant behavior of Merritt, which it would be injustice to omit: Being obliged in an attack I made on the rebel partisan Snipe to approach the house in which he had his party, through a narrow lane, terminated within half musket shot of the house by a strong gate, which, I expected, would detain us some time to open, when it was probable their guard would fire on us, and as I was particularly anxious to prevent any kind of check with the troop I then had with me, I picked out Merritt, Corporal Frank and four men of my troop to proceed and make an opening for the detachment, which he effected with such readiness and spirit, that the passage was cleared by the time that the detachment could get up, although for that purpose, he had been obliged to dismount his party under the fire from their guard, and that the gate and fence on each side of it had been secured and strengthened, with an unexpected degree of care and attention. Col. Balfour, writing to me in the month of April, when I commanded at George Town, says, 'Being empowered by Lord Cornwallis to raise a troop of Provincial light dragoons, I have, for some time wished to try your Lt. Willson as captain and this gentleman as Lieutenant (meaning Cornet Merritt); they both have been recommended as good and active officers, and, if you agree with me in opinion that a troop could be raised in or near George Town I should have no hesitation in making the appointment.'

"Thus I have mentioned to you a few of the many meritorious services performed by the officers and men of my troop, when in Virginia and South Carolina. I regret much at my not having kept a journal during that time, as it would now enable me to do more ample justice to those whose zeal, bravery and good conduct entitle them to my fullest and fairest report."

(End of extracts from Col. Simcoe's Journal.)

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## HAND TO HAND FIGHT

In an illustrated volume of "Interesting and Patriotic Incidents Strikingly and Elegantly Illustrated," published in New York in 1856, we find the following:—

"Colonel Herry, a revolutionary officer, states that he was sent by General Marion to reconnoitre George Town. His narrative is as follows: 'I proceeded with a guide through the woods all night. At the dawn of day I drew near the town. I laid in ambuscade with 30 men and their officers near the road. After sunrise a chair appeared with

two ladies, escorted by two British officers. I was ready in advance to cut them off, but reflecting that they might escape and alarm the town, which would prevent my taking greater numbers, I desisted. The escort and chair halted very near me, but soon the latter went on and the officers galloped in retrograde into the town. Our party continued in ambush until 10 o'clock.

'Nothing appearing, and men and horses having eaten nothing for thirty-six hours, we were hungered and retired to a plantation of my Quarter Master's, a Mr. White, not far distant. There a curious scene took place. Four ladies appeared, two of whom were Mrs. White and her daughter. I was asked what I wanted. I answered, food, refreshment. The other two ladies were those whom I had seen escorted by the British officers. They seemed greatly agitated and begged most earnestly that I would go away, for the family were very poor, had no provisions of any sort; that I knew they were whigs and surely would not add to their distress. So pressing were they for my immediately leaving the plantation that I thought they had more in view than they pretended.

'I kept my eye on Mrs. White, and saw she had a smiling countenance, but said nothing. Soon she left the room, and I left it also and went into the piazza, laid my cap, sword and pistols on the long bench and walked the piazza, when I discovered Mrs. White behind the house chimney beckoning me.

'I got to her, undiscovered by the young ladies, when she said, "Colonel Herry, be on your guard; these young ladies are just from George Town; they are much frightened, and I believe the British are leaving it, and may soon attack you.

"'As to provisions, which they make such a rout about, I have plenty for your men and horses in yonder barn, but you must effect to take them by force; hams, bacon, rice and fodder are there. You must insist on the key of the barn, and threaten to split the door with an axe, unless immediately opened." I begged her to say no more, for I was well acquainted with all such matters, to leave the ladies and everything else, to my management. She said, "Yes, but do not ruin us; be artful and cunning or Mr. White may be hanged and all our houses burnt over our heads."

'We both secretly returned, she to the room where the young ladies were, and I to the piazza I had just left.'

No time was allowed to extort the provisions. He had scarcely arrived at the piazza, when his videttes gave the alarm of an approaching enemy, and forgetting that his cap, sword and pistols lay upon the bench, he mounted, left the enclosure and rushed into the melee.

By the time Herry reached the scene, his troopers were engaged in a severe hand-to-hand conflict with the dragoons, and it was not until he was about to engage with the Captain that Herry discovered that he was weaponless.





"Cap'n Merritt and Herry's Officers"  
From a book of illustrated narratives of the revolutionary war published  
in New York, Jan, 4, 1856; Wherein it is described by Col. Herry,  
N.S. Army, how "one British Officer beat off three Americans."

The British had been taken by surprise, and after a few moment's fighting, they retreated, Captain Merritt bringing up the rear and urging them on. Only two out of seventeen escaped death or capture, and they were Captain Merritt and a sergeant.

'My officers in succession,' continues Colonel Herry, 'came up with Captain Merritt and engaged him. He was a brave fellow. Baxter, with pistols fired at his breast, and missing him, retired. Poslet and Greene engaged him with swords, but both were beaten off. Greene nearly lost his head. His buckskin breeches were cut through several inches. I almost blush to say that this one British officer, Captain Merritt, beat three Americans. He left his horse and took to a swamp, wherein he remained until the next day.'

Colonel Herry, after the war, met Captain Merritt in New York City, and the latter, recognizing him, said that he had never had such a fright in his life as upon that occasion. 'Will you believe me, sir,' said he, 'when I tell you that I went into the fight that morning with my locks of as beautiful an auburn as ever curled upon the forehead of a youth and by the time I crawled into George Town next day, they were as grey as a badger.'"

#### CONTINUATION OF "MEMOIRS."

##### **Drives Gen. Putnam down the Heights at West Point.**

Amongst his other numerous exploits, the following is well authenticated and recorded:—

By orders from his Colonel, he scoured the disturbed country in all directions, and at one time was within a hair's breadth of capturing the notorious Putnam, who was for cruelty a second Danton. He (Putnam) ignominiously hung Judge Jones, a most accomplished man, because he was a Loyalist; for this and other atrocities great exertions were made to rid the world of such a cruel monster. Merritt, one day, pursued him (Putnam) to the edge of a deep ravine (West Point heights)\* but he made his escape at the risk of his neck by riding through a copse that led to a sequestered valley below. Had he (Putnam) possessed one spark of bravery he would have faced his pursuer and tried single combat, there being no one at hand to have assisted. With an oath at retreating, Putnam swore that if he could only get the Captain in his possession he would hang him, but that day never arrived. Whilst his odious name lasts he will be handed down to posterity as a cruel, cowardly monster.

The Captain, on the contrary, stands recorded in history as a brave man and one incapable of performing a mean action, adhering strictly to the code of honorable warfare. No wonder that Governor Simcoe welcomed his brave young officer to Canada and assisted him by grants of land and offices under the Government as a remuneration for his services and his revolutionary losses.

During his campaign in South Carolina he married Mary Hamilton, of Dorchester. The ceremony took place at Charleston, July 27, 1781, she being then 20 years of age, being 2 years younger than my father.

\* (My Uncle T. R. Merritt told me his grandfather often related to him how the priming of his pistols—then flint locks—got wet in crossing a stream or otherwise he contented Gen. Putnam never would have escaped alive.)



They followed the British army to New York and from there to Saint Johns (Sic), New Brunswick, a greater part of the family removing thither, as the property at Mile End was in possession of the rebels and was afterwards confiscated. Previous to leaving New York their first child, Amy, was born in 1782, who died in infancy. Phoebe was born at St. John's, 1784, who also died in infancy. The following year, 1785, my mother, not liking the country, persuaded my father to return to South Carolina, where they found all their friends scattered abroad with the troublesome times, so that they resolved to return and try King Street, where a homestead remained after the peace of 1783. How they managed we have no account, but we find them living at Bedford in 1790, having for some time quitted the army, as the dragoons to which Colonel Simcoe belonged was disbanded and he gone home to England.

At Bedford my father, in 1791, turned his attention to business, successfully, the bitter rancour of party spirit having subsided. From this place they removed to New York, as the old papers testify, there being a lot of receipts for money paid there to diverse individuals.

During their stay at Bedford my sister, Caroline, was born in 1791, who afterwards married at the age of 20, at Niagara, James Gordon, Esq., a gentleman of considerable property. The issue of this marriage was one son, born 1813, died in Paris, France, 1836, aged 23; and one daughter—born 1812; drowned, 1824, aged 12 years. The mother and daughter were unfortunately drowned at Queenston. Mr. Gordon and son went to England to reside. Mr. Gordon died in London, 1846, and was buried in Kelsall cemetery. This was the fate of my eldest sister, Caroline, showing the instability of all human calculation for prolonged happiness

My father, hearing of his old Colonel's appointment as Governor of Upper Canada, took a journey thither to see him in 1794, and ascertain the prospects for a future settlement, as he preferred residing under the British Government and Laws to those of a republic.

The travelling at that period was long and tedious, as but few roads had been cut, and the location widely scattered; however, in due time he reached Niagara, where he found the Governor, who gave him a hearty welcome and gave him so great encouragement that he returned to New York, wound up his mercantile affairs, and brought his family along to Oswego, that route being more frequented then than the one to Niagara.

I was born at Bedford, in Westchester County, State of New York, on the 3rd of July, 1793, and came to Canada with my father and mother and sister Caroline in early part of 1796, being then only 3 years of age.

By the Simcoe papers, we find, that it was my father's intention to bring over with his effects, 1 barrel salt, then a very **scarce, dear** commodity, but the revenue officer stationed at Oswego, where we still held the post, detained it, acting up to orders previously received. Why an embargo should have been laid on salt at this early period is a mystery, as it was an article much needed by the settlers, and which they could not do very well without. In some places it was from 4 to 6 dollars

a bushel, according to locality. There was very little manufactured at the Government works at Louth, whereas, the Onondaga salt works had long been successfully in operation, and they were then offering it at one dollar a bushel, cash. Governor Simcoe, on being applied to, immediately, gave orders for its release.

We landed at Queenston, which had just become a rising place, as the Hon. Robert Hamilton, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Adams and a variety of Scotch merchants had settled down there.

My father, having had enough of mercantile affairs at Bedford and New York, determined on being a farmer, as more congenial to a man who had held a commission in the army and now retired on half-pay. He reconnoitered the country and found a clearance about 2 miles from the present town of St. Catharines, and latterly called Gillelands. Having made arrangements with the owner, he moved his family thither as a temporary shelter from the storms of life. It was a perfect wilderness around with a few Indian paths, and but thinly settled, so that roads were out of the question.

I have heard my mother say she would sit down and cry for hours, wondering how she should ever get the children educated. This refinement of feeling in time wore off, through having domestic duties to attend to, which diverted the mind. It was at last a cause of thankfulness that they had a house, such as it was, over their heads to shelter them for the wintry blasts.

Soon after their settlement in this, then out of the way, location, they were visited by a tall hardy son of the wilderness, whose name was Pauling. A few years previous he had received a grant of land from Lord Dorchester near Lake Ontario. Having trended his way through an Indian path to the new settler's residence, he called to offer his services, and to give them his experience in the bush.

On entering the dwelling, he found my mother in tears by the fire. Thinking it was the result of their lonely situation with two young children, my sister Caroline and myself, he tried to cheer her up, stating that in a short time they would be used to it and feel comparatively happy.

"Oh, no!" said the Captain, "that is not the cause; it is because we are out of bread, and although we have flour yet she does not understand making it properly." "Well!" said the good-natured farmer, "if that's all, I will soon remedy this." So, bidding her cheer up, he said he would return to his wife and bring them some bread; so he took his thick walking stick, which he always carried in the event of meeting a bear on the route, and having arrived home by the Indian path, told his wife the circumstance. She was soon up to the elbows in dough, and, in due time, baked two large loaves. Pauling, in the evening, when the moon got up, ran his stick through the loaves and off he trudged to the new settlers, whom he soon cheered by his attention, partaking of a frugal supper with them. Then he bade them good-night, stating that the next day he would bring his wife and initiate Mrs. Merritt in the art and mystery of bread-making. Thus, by a little act of kindness he



poured consolation into their hearts, and my mother learned the art from Mrs. Pauling. It was needless to say that they got on famously and ever remained sincere friends and neighbors. Their farms were four miles apart, but that was thought nothing of in those primitive times. A few years afterwards, when the Captain obtained the appointment as Sheriff, a nephew of the said Pauling obtained a situation as under-sheriff, thus fulfilling the old proverb, "that one good turn deserves another."

This little anecdote shows how necessary it is for all families, of whatever class, to bring up their daughters as good housekeepers, no one knowing how soon calamities may arise, from war or other causes, to place them in a similar situation to that just described. The two families, from that hour to the time of death, became great friends, and often recurred to bygone days, contrasting the former wildness of the scene, as they remembered it, to the splendid farms and homesteads which grew up around them.

Things, in time, brightened up, but they were dissatisfied with their location, as the log-house in which they resided was none of the best, it having been erected in a hurry by a previous occupant. Mr. Pauling, also, wishing them nearer neighbors, found that a person named John McCoy, who had located on the Port Dalhousie track, was willing to remove for a certain consideration, so, after a little manoeuvring, a bargain was struck and a time fixed for departure next spring.

The winter happening to be very snowy and severe they had great trouble in keeping in check the war of elements, which greatly dilapidated their domicile, and, at length, one frightful stormy night the roof gave way and they had well nigh been buried alive. In the morning it was soon noised abroad, so that the neighbors appeared with a "bee" of sleighs to convey them away. The party who had agreed to the surrender of his clearance was willing to share the house with them, so they were soon in comfortable quarters, thankful for their deliverance, and in spring took possession of the whole 200 acres which they retained for 30 years.

My father often went over to Niagara and York to see the Governor, who continued very friendly. and granted him 2,000 acres of land further west, but that part of the country not having been then opened, they continued where they were, making improvements.

In 1797, Anna Maria (afterwards Mrs. Ingersoll) was born here, and about this time the Governor gave my father the appointment of Surveyor of Woods and Forests, which he held until his decease, in 1842. This was some remuneration for his previous services in the cause of his King. He also obtained grants of land for all his children.

Here they would sit round a good blazing fire of an evening and talk of the many privations in the bush, and particularly of the year of scarcity in 1789.

Among the singular events that happened during the year of scarcity is the following, related by Mr. Ward, of St. Catharines, a person

of undoubted veracity. He was on a visit to the Short Hills, Pelham, during the winter, when the conversation turned on the affairs of olden time.

Some of the party were descended from the old settlers, and one old lady stated that her grandfather and grandmother Hill suffered incredible hardships during that frightful period. The aged couple, being infirm and incapable of much out-door labor, were soon deprived of all their store of food, and must inevitably have perished had not a most miraculous interference of Providence saved their lives. Every morning for five weeks a wild pigeon appeared at the door, which allowed itself to be captured by the old lady, which served herself and husband for food during the day. This remarkable event continued daily to the end of the period, when spring returned and they could then have recourse to berries and roots for sustenance. We implicitly believe the Bible account of Elijah being fed by ravens, and as the same divine power exists (although not often manifested in these degenerate days) yet we can see no reason why, under trying circumstances this aged couple, from a firm reliance on Almighty power, should not, in these sequestered woods, have been preserved, to testify to the world that there is aid at hand to relieve under every woeful calamity.

A few years after this event, when more settlers had arrived from the States and England, the hospitable domicile of Captain Merritt was a rendezvous for the surrounding country. They had purchased two hundred acres of land about two miles from St. Catharines and built a comfortable residence, where Miss Pauling was frequently to be found. Mr. Wood, an Englishman, who then resided at Niagara, was a frequent guest, having an eye to Miss Pauling as his future wife. On one occasion, time passed pleasantly, and on Mr. Wood taking leave to return home on horseback, Mrs. Merritt said she expected a letter from New Brunswick, which would be directed to Niagara, and hoped he would soon bring it for her. On his return home, which was 15 miles distant, he found that one had that day arrived by the mail. With Miss Pauling in his head he again mounted his horse and delivered it that same evening, to the joy of Mrs. Merritt and the admiration of Miss P., who considered that a young man so attentive would make an excellent husband, which, afterwards, proved true, as in due course of time the ceremony took place and they settled down on a farm about one mile from the Merritt's, which made it very agreeable and pleasant to all parties.

In 1801 \*Susan was born. She afterwards married Elias Adams, son of George Adams, Esq., a highly respectable old settler at Queenston, of whom I shall have occasion to mention hereafter.

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\*General Brock spent the night before the Battle of Queenston at the house of Major Thos. Merritt, at Niagara, and, as he was leaving next morning, he said to his host's little daughter, Susan, "You shall buckle on my sword," which the child did, after he lifted her on to a chair to enable her to reach the clasp, and he then kissed her. He was killed in battle that day. The child afterwards married Col. Elias Adams, of St. Catharines, who served in the Rebellion of 1837.

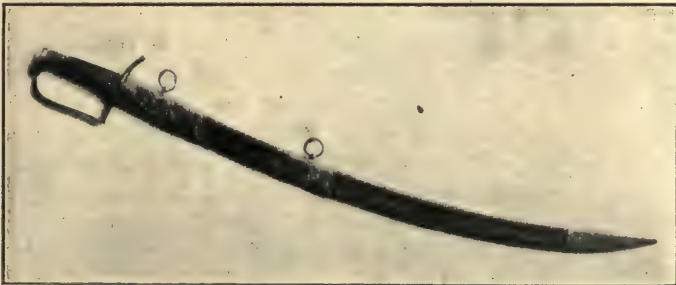


In 1803, as per date of his appointment (15th Oct., 1803) my father took a house at Niagara, and entered upon his new duties as High Sheriff of the Niagara District, having succeeded James Clark, Esq., who held it pro tem, and whose son, James, was appointed Clerk of the Council. This gentleman was an elder brother of the present Colonel Clark of Port Dalhousie. My father, at this period, was a remarkably active, enterprising man, and at the time the office of Sheriff was, in many respects, a very difficult office, from the varied dispositions of persons unfortunately brought into contact with that court by litigation, yet he carried on the arduous task to the general satisfaction of the community and credit to himself.

#### War 1812-14.

He was appointed Major Commandant of "Niagara Light Dragoons" on June 12th, 1812. He was present at the Battle of Queenston Heights and in Major-General Sheaffe's report is alluded to as follows: "Major Merritt, commanding the Niagara Dragoons, accompanied me and gave much assistance with part of his corps."

On the surrender of the Yankees Major Merritt was deputed by General Sheaffe to receive the swords of the enemy, which he did by riding along the column and placing them on the pommel of his saddle. One or more of these swords are still in the possession of his descendants.



*After the battle of Queenston Heights 73 United States Officers surrendered their swords. Lassing states they were collected by Major Merritt on his saddle-bow.  
This one is among the "Merritt Loan Collection" in the Canadian Military Institute in Toronto.*

He also officiated as one of the pall-bearers at General Brock's funeral on November 5th, when Sir Isaac Brock's remains were interred at 11 a.m. in the Cavalier Bastion at Fort George.

The Niagara Light Dragoons were disbanded 25th of February, 1813

After holding the situation of Sheriff for about twenty years, and being then about 64 years of age, he retired from public life, disposed of the homestead on the Port Dalhousie road, as the family were dispersed and settled, and passed the remainder of his days with my

mother in a house and garden nearly in the centre of the town (St. Catharines), where he could amuse himself with the daily passing scenes and enjoy the society of a choice collection of friends, who always valued his society. Perhaps a finer old couple could not be found in the country. They had passed through many hardships together in the earlier period of life, and lived to witness a rising generation of young people, who entered upon a world with far more auspicious views than it was their lot to experience at first.

The evening of their day was serene, calm, tranquil and resigned; both looking forward to a never-ending meeting in the Mansions above, and quitting this chequered sphere within 12 months of each other with the assurance that they had done their duty to their children, to the world and to that Divine Being who had brought them into existence.

Thomas Merritt died May, 1842, aged 83.

Mary Merritt died May, 1843, aged 82.

Their remains, on both occasions, were attended to the family vault at St. George's Church, St. Catharines, by a very large and respectable portion of the settlers for many miles round, who paid their last tribute to departed worth.

On the head-stone is the following inscription:—

In Memory of  
THOMAS MERRITT, Esq.,  
Cornet in the Queen's Rangers under Colonel Simcoe during  
the American Revolution

And Major  
Commanding the Cavalry on the frontier, in the War of 1812.  
Appointed Surveyor of Woods and Forests on the 24th of May, 1800,  
And Sheriff of the Niagara District 5th October, 1803.

He departed this life on the 12th of May, 1842,

Aged 83 Years.

Also in Memory of his Beloved Wife

MARY,

Who Departed This Life on the 21st March, 1843, aged 82 years.

(Thos. Merritt was born Oct. 28th, 1759, and died 12th May, 1842, aged 82 years 6 months 14 days.)

Like all the early settlers, Mr. Merritt and his family had at first to undergo many hardships and privations, yet they soon became reconciled, knowing they would live in security and peace under the auspices of the British Government. Mrs. Merritt's greatest concern appears to have been lest her children's education should be neglected, but this question had been under the serious consideration of Governor Simcoe, who took great pains to induce men of education to come over from the Old Country, in which he was successful, good schools being opened in Niagara as early as 1796.



Among the family records were found some letters written at an early date to his brother in the State of New York, and to his father, who had settled early in New Brunswick. He writes in good spirits, as the following will testify :—

No. 1.

St. Catharines, Upper Canada, July 16, 1800.

Mr. Nehemiah Merritt, St. John, New Brunswick.

To the care of Messrs. Brace & Morrison, New York.

Dear Brother,—I have just received a letter from you by Mr. Mead, dated the 3rd of May. I expect the letter has been 200 miles beyond me, and now just come to hand. Mr. Mead has behaved very ill, or else you would have heard from me by the time you mention, the first of August.

I trust this will meet you at New York.

I am happy to hear that our good father, David Merritt and family, are well. Write to them, from wherever you receive this and let them know that my family, as well as my brother William's, are all well, and that we are doing well, in the farming way.

William has got fine wheat, rye, corn and everything else, and that in great abundance.

Perhaps this is one of the finest countries in the world, for a farmer that will be industrious. I should not be surprised if the greater part of your country people were to come on here. You would be astonished to see the people from all parts of the States, by land and by water, 250 wagons at a time, with their families, on the road—something like an army on the move.

The goodness of the land is beyond all description. The best crops this season I ever saw. Provisions plenty, but money very scarce—little or none.

Should you think it worth your while to bring in a small cargo of spirits, Port and Sherry wine, a box of Bohea and Green Tea, some Brandy, a few loaves of sugar and any other thing you may think proper, but should the season be late when you get to Schenectady, I should think it prudent to leave them with Captain Walton, and I will send our sleighs for them.

On the other hand, should you incline to come by land, buy a good horse or mare, saddle and bridle, out of some of the livery stables in New York, for at this season of the year they are very cheap. Come up to King Street (Long Island) and you will find Nehemiah Sherwood, Joshua Lyon or some other persons; give invitations for them all to come and see this country.

Keep the post road to Niagara, and when you cross over on the British side, enquire for me, and any one will tell you where I live.

Should you come by water, Captain Walton will give you every direction how to proceed and the cheapest mode.

People often wish to work their passage to this place, for he assured that the Mohawk boatmen are as great rogues and jockeys as ever you were acquainted with, but I trust by this time you have your eye teeth cut.

Bring us all the latest papers you can, from every place.

Give my compliments to all enquiring friends.

Dear Brother,  
Believe that I am,  
Yours most truly,  
THOMAS MERRITT.

N. B.—Captain Vanderburgh and many other of your acquaintance are living here.

No. 2.

Niagara, Upper Canada, August 20, 1800.

Dear Brother:—

This comes by a gentleman of my particular acquaintance, Mr. William Gamble, from this place, who, I hope, you will have the good luck to fall in with, who can be of infinite service to you, on the route to Canada, and can give you every information respecting my family and the country.

Should you, in New York or elsewhere, light on a good woman and man servant, pray bring them on for us, and I will gladly pay the expenses.

If you come by water, bring a griddle and a dutch wheat fan. You can get them at Schenectady.

Pray, wherever you get this letter, write back to New Brunswick and let father know that I and family are well, also William and family.

I trust you will so arrange your business as to remain with us a year, if not longer. Polly, Caroline and Hamilton (afterwards the Hon. W. H. Merritt) beg to be remembered to you.

I wish you health and safe arrival at Niagara.

Yours,  
THOMAS MERRITT.

Mr. Nehemiah Merritt,  
Care of Brace & Morrison, New York,  
Per favor Mr. Gamble.

Mr. Merritt, having been an officer in Colonel Simcoe's regiment, the Queen's Rangers, during the Revolutionary struggle, was well taken care of, when the Colonel received his commands to proceed to Canada



to carry out the measures of Mr. Pitt—the Division of the Provinces. When Mr. Merritt heard of this appointment he paid the Governor a visit, which resulted in his arranging his affairs at New York and bringing his family to Canada as a U. E. settler. He soon obtained 2,000 acres of land for his former services and losses sustained by the revolution, as well as an appointment the following year as Commissioner of Woods and Forests. This enabled him to live in comparative comfort, in addition to his half pay.

In 1803 the Sheriff of the District, when he obtained this appointment also.

The following letter explains the circumstances, so that he has just cause to applaud the new Government.

No. 3.

Sheriff's Office, Niagara, 14th April, 1804.

Honoured Father:—

I have the pleasure to inform you that we are all in a tolerable good state of health at this time. We have just recovered from bad colds, which have been very prevalent here this spring, owing to the long and tedious winter that we have had. It has been so hard that many have lost all their stock. I have suffered very much. William Merritt, my brother, has lost all his, excepting one yoke of oxen, which comes hard upon him in a new country, and a new beginner. I shall give him all the assistance in my power, which he stands very much in need of. He and his wife and child are well. He has got a good farm, and with industry and health will get through, notwithstanding his losses. I am now in the town of Niagara, capital of this Province. Thank God, I am doing very well. I have many appointments under Government. The last is, High Sheriff of this part of the country, which is large and thickly settled, and much business to be done.

I hold my half pay as Lieutenant of Dragoons, Surveyor of Woods for this Province, Collector of the King's rents of crown and clergy reserves, and of the fines, &c., of this district. I cannot exactly say, but I think must yield me a sum of two thousand dollars per annum.

Mary wishes very much to come and see you all this summer. I have not heard one syllable from you, or either of the boys or even my sister, Phoebe, in about two years.

It makes me almost afraid to write, for fear that you are not in the land of the living.

Tell my brothers that I shall be very glad to hear from them, if they do not think it worth their while to come and see me.

As for you, my honoured father, I do not ever expect to see you again, so God bless you, Adieu. I have four children, Caroline, William Hamilton, Maria and Susan, and fine prosperous children they are.

As for my son, William (Hon. W. H. Merritt), there are but few

that exceed him in learning, and as soon as the war is over I intend to send him to London. I think that I have interest sufficient to get him into the Navy or Army, whichever he may be most inclined.

Remember me to my mother, David's wife and children and Nehemiah and his wife.

My wife joins me in her heart in wishing you all the happiness that this world can afford you. As for news, we have but little, except the war and France and the concerns thereof, which I trust you are acquainted with.

I am, honoured Sir,  
Your affectionate son,

THOMAS MERRITT.

To Thomas Merritt.

Care of Captain Nehemiah Merritt, St. John, New Brunswick.

No. 4.

Niagara, May 20th, 1806.

Dear Brother :—

I have just now an opportunity of writing by Major Chalmers, brother-in-law to Judge Saunders. I have frequently written to you and father and David, but never can hear from you but by chance. I am happy to inform you that we are all well. William and his wife are now at my house, they are also well. My son, William, has written to you and his grandfather; he is a fine boy and out at boarding school. Mary and himself were coming to see you all, and to leave him at Windsor College, but there being so many reports about war with the States, that they are afraid to venture.

I have been High Sheriff about three years, with a salary in one of the first districts in Upper Canada, and hope to do well, unless I should meet with some serious losses. I am told you are married. If so, I wish you a great deal of happiness in a wife.

Please to remember me to her. I should be happy to see her. Tell our good father I have got leave from the Governor to be absent from my several offices for six months, when I trust it will not be long before I will see you all.

My love to David, his wife and children, in the meanwhile I shall be glad to hear from you all.

In haste,  
I am, dear brother,  
Yours most sincerely,  
THOMAS MERRITT.

Mr. Nehemiah Merritt, Merchant, Saint Johns, New Brunswick.



### Continuation of Narrative.

The Agricultural Society, established in 1798, under the auspices of Governor Simcoe, who annually subscribed ten guineas and dined with the members, supplied them with books, &c., was also supported by my father, who felt a great interest in its welfare.

I found among his papers a list of the Directors, which will be interesting to the branches of different families, whose ancestors supported and patronized so useful a society, and which laid the foundation of our present noble institution, upon which so high a eulogium was passed by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Newcastle, who visited the grand Cattle Show at Hamilton in 1859.

President—The Governor.

Vice Presidents and Directors of the Niagara District Branch of the Upper Canada Agricultural Society:—

First Vice-President—Rev. R. Addison.

Second Vice-President—Thos. Merritt, Esq.

Directors—Robert Hamilton, Esq., Niagara; J. Warren, Esq., Bertie; Capt. Usher, Willoughby; Samuel Street, Esq., Stamford; George Adams, Esq., Grantham; George Ball, Esq., Louth; Dr. Sumner, Clinton; Abraham Nelles, Grimsby; Crowel Wilson, Esq., Crowland; Christian Zavitz, Humberstone; Shubal Park, Esq., Wamfleet; Edmond Hodges, Esq., Caistor; John J. Taylor, Esq., Gainsborough; John Decow, Esq., Thorold; Elijah E. Phelps, Esq., Pelham; Warner Nelles, Esq., Grand River; J. Symington, Esq., Treasurer; J. Kirby, Esq., Secretary.

Niagara, 1804.

Although a high official situation, yet a sheriff, at times, has to undergo many trying scenes, but my father, naturally a brave man, never shrunk from his public duty.

During the War of 1812-1815 a number of reckless characters were about the country, whose object appears to have been to sow the seeds of rebellion.

To the credit of the Loyalists, great efforts were made to bring these disaffected persons to justice, in which the Government succeeded, considering it highly disgraceful that those who had become well off by reason of the liberal grants of land from the Government to their families should be allowed to contaminate others with their republican principles. Great exertions were made to put a stop to their proceedings, and in due course of time twenty-one were brought up for trial. Eighteen were convicted of treasonable practices after a fair and candid trial and nine of the principal ring-leaders hung on Burlington Heights.

It was a solemn scene and effectually put a stop to the further proceedings of the party. It was the duty of my father as Sheriff to see the law carried into effect, which services he performed with that feeling which characterized him through life. It made a deep impression upon his mind, and in all probability influenced him in his decision of retiring into private life sooner than he, perhaps, might have done.

As the Chief Justice's information was only verbal and from memory, forty-five years after the trial took place, he suggested that application be made of the Clerk of the Crown, which has since been done.

Mr. Small very politely took the trouble to search the old records, and was successful in finding the original documents.

There is a list of all the parties implicated who were tried, many found guilty, others acquitted for want of sufficient evidence and sixteen of the worst and most dangerous character executed, but the estates of all, which were specified, appear to have been confiscated.

The trial took place at different dates, as the parties were taken, reserving the worst to the last.

A Special Commission was appointed for a fair examination, and on the 21st of June, 1814, the trial took place at Ancaster:

Present:—Hon. the Chief Justice Scott, Hon. William Dummer Powell, Hon. William Campbell, Richard Hall and Samuel Hall, Associates.

The prisoners were brought to the Bar as follows:—Jacob Overholser, Aaron Stevens, Gerritt Hull, John Johnston, Samuel Hartwell, Stephen Hartwell, Dr. Lindsay, George Peacock, Jr., Isaiah Burch, Benjamin Simmons, Adam Chrysler, Isaac Pettit, Cornelius Hovey, John Dunham, Noah Payne Hopkins.

Daniel Phelps, Elisha Smith, William Markle, Abraham Markle and many others found guilty, but respited, estates confiscated, some outlawed.

The prisoners were separately asked if they had anything to offer why judgment should not be passed upon them according to law. No response. When, proclamation being made, sentence of death was passed by his Honor, Chief Justice Scott, on each of them as follows:

That you (naming them individually) each of you be taken to the place from whence you came, and from thence you are to be drawn on hurdles to the place of execution, where you are to be hangd by the neck, but not until you are dead, for you must be cut down while you are alive and your entrails taken out and burned before your faces, your heads then to be cut off and your bodies divided into four quarters and your heads and quarters to be at the King's disposal, and may God have mercy upon your souls."

Names of the Jury.—Thomas Birch, James Connelly, James Secord, William Osterhout, Thomas Kerr, Stephen Emmett, George Reid William Hodgkinson, John Chrysler, Francis Goring, John Smith, John Grier.

The following bill was found among the Sheriff's papers, which shows that although many luxuries were high-priced, contrasted with the present day, yet many families indulged in them. It will be perceived the



manly game of billiards was then in vogue in 1804:—

Thos. Merritt, Esq. ——— Dr.

To B. Gilbert.

1804.		£	s	d
Dec. 2nd,	To balance due this day .....	6	12	3
Dec. 4th,	To Supper and Club .....		11	
	To 8 quarts oats .....		2	8
Dec. 5th,	To Horse at hay .....		3	
	To Lodging .....		1	
Dec. 6th,	To Supper and Club .....		3	
Dec. 7th,	To ½ pt. brandy .....		2	6
	To dinner .....		2	6
	To Horse at hay—2 nights and 1 day .....		9	
Dec. 10th,	To Supper 2s., Bill 14th 5s. ....		7	
1805				
Jan. 11th,	To Supper 2s., negus & brandy 2s9d .....		4	9
Jan. 26th,	To 25 oysters 5s, coffee 2s .....		7	
Feb. 16th,	To 4 doz. oysters .....		10	
	To ½ pt. rum .....		2	
	To trimmings .....		2	
Feb. 21st,	To Breakfast .....		2	
	To 1 quart beer .....		1	
	To Supper and Club wt. Mr. Chew. ....		14	
	To 1 quart Rum .....		6	
	To 1 Pack Cards .....		3	
	To Games and Liquor at Billiard Table, Oct. 22nd .....	1	17	
Mch. 4th,	To ½ pt. brandy .....		2	6
Mch. 7th,	To Dinner and Club to self and Dr. Muirhead .....	1	3	
	To 2 Gas wt. Mr. Powell .....		1	4
	To Supper .....		2	
Mch. 9th,	To Dinner and Club .....		10	6
	To Supper and Club .....		18	
	To ½ pt. Rum .....		2	
Mch. 15th,	To ½ pt. Rum .....		2	
	To Snack and Rum .....		3	
	To Snack wt. Mr. Powell .....		3	
Mch. 25th,	To ½ pt. Rum .....		2	
	To Snack .....		1	6
Mch. 29th,	To Pint Wine .....		4	
Mch. 31st,	To 100 oysters .....	1		
	Continued .....	17	6	6

1805		£	s	d
	To amt. brot. over .....	17	6	6
May 17th,	To Dinner 2s6d, ½ pt. Rum 2s ....		4	0
July 5th,	To 1 bottle Wine .....		8	
	To 1 bottle Wine .....		8	
July 10th,	To 2 glasses punch .....		4	

July 20th,	To 1 glass punch .....	2	
	To Breakfast 2s6d, dinner 3s, omitted 5th July .....	5	6
	To 1 bottle wine 8s, pt. beer 6d ....	8	6
Aug. 7th,	To ½ pt. brandy 2s6d .....	2	6
	To Dinner and Club 6th .....	10	
	To Dinner and Club .....	6	
	To 1 Gill rum to Thos. ....	1	
Aug. 14th,	To 1 Gill rum and sugar .....	1	6
	To Dinner and Club .....	8	
Aug. 15th,	To Horse at hay 2s, oats 2s .....	4	
	To Dinner 3s, Bottle wine 6s .....	11	
Aug. 22nd,	To 5 glasses punch .....	5	
	To ½ pt. Brdy. 2s6d, Dinner 3s6d ..	6	
Aug. 24th,	To 1 pt. wine and dinner 8s .....	8	
	To Horse at hay 2 days .....	8	
	To 20 quarts oats .....	6	8
Sep. 5th,	To 1 bottle wine .....	8	
	To Dinner and Club 4th .....	9	3
Sep. 5th,	Dinner and Club .....	17	2
Sep. 10th,	To Horse at hay 4 days .....	16	
	To 36 Gls. oats .....	12	
Oct. 9th,	To Breakfast .....	2	6
Oct. 10th,	To ½ pt. Rum 2s .....	2	
	To Dinner and Club .....	8	
	To Horse at hay .....	6	
Oct. 16th,	To ½ pt. rum .....	2	
Oct. 16th,	To Dinner and Club .....	3	6
Nov. 3rd,	To 1 bottle rum .....	7	

27 18 1

Rec'd payment in full, Nov. 26th, 1805,  
BENJ. GILBERT.

Thomas Merritt, Esq.,  
Sept 1 to Oct. 16th, 1805.  
Receipt.

(Extract from Militia General Orders, 1812-16. p. 40)

Adjutant General's Office, York, 24th April, 1812

Militia General Orders

His Honour the President is pleased to appoint Thomas Merritt, Esq., to be Major of Cavalry in the Militia.



(Extract from "Officers of the British Forces in Canada during the War of 1812-15," by L. Homfray Irving, Honorary Librarian, Canadian Military Institute, Toronto.

### NIAGARA LIGHT DRAGOONS

Engagements—Fort Erie, 9th Oct., 1812. Queenston, 13th Oct., 1812.  
Major Commandant, Thomas Merritt, June 1812

First Troop— Capt. Alexander Hamilton

Lieutenant William Hamilton Merritt

Cornet John Pell Major (Killed at Fort Erie 11th. Oct., 1812).

Quartermaster Charles Ingersoll (Promoted Cornet 24th Oct. 1812).

Duncan Clow, (promoted Quartermaster from Sergeant 24th Oct. 1812).

A proposed second troop was not raised.

Other names from a document in the archives in Ottawa designated "Nominal Return of Major Merritt's Troop of Niagara Light Dragoons on service from the 1st May to the 24th December, 1812, dated York, 19th Jan., 1820, signed W. Coffin, Adj.-Gen., Militia Upper Canada".

Sergt. Richard Woodruff

Sergt. George Shaw

Corp'l David Secord

Farrier David Young

Saddler Timothy Street

Trumpeter Andrew Coace

Trumpeter Joshua Corbice

### Privates (50)

Adams, William

Allen, Seneca

Bender, John

Berger, David

Campbell, Peter

Caswell, Jerotham

Caswell, Nathaniel

Caswell, Daniel

Cline, Henry

Cutler, Abram

Cutler, Jacob

Dagget, Eliazar

Davis, James

Fields, Daniel

Fuller, Asa

Green, William Henry

Graham, David

Hodge, Kinsan Samuel

Henry, James

Hawn, William

Hoverland, John

Horstider, Abraham

Killings, Richard

Lawrence, John

Mann, John

McKenney, Amos

Manacle, William

Nichols, Abraham

Nichols, Charles

Pew, James

Putman, David

Pawling, Henry

Rodgers, Alexander

Rykert, John

Rose, Alexander

Runchy, Robert

Summers, William

Swayze, Samuel

Slater, Major

Lane, Thomas

Steinboof, Jacob

Smith, John R.

Towsley, Alanson

Wiers, Charles

Willson, Joseph

Willson, Benjamin

Willson, William

Willson, Uriah

Wintermoot, William

Wynn, William (promoted Corp'l.

12th October, 1812)

Millard, Samuel

From Archives—Ottawa.

“No. 4. Nominal Return of Artillery, Cavalry &c. in Service during the late war.

W. Merritt's Light Dragoons (1)  
R. D. Fraser Light Dragoons (2)  
C. Jones, Light Dragoons (3)  
I. Swayze, Art'y Drivers (4)  
J. McGregor, Kent Vol. (5)  
J. Powell's Mil. Art'y. (6)  
A. Cameron, do.  
W. Caldwell's Western Rangers (7)  
J. Robertson Corps of Artificers (8)  
T. Merritt, Light Dragoons  
Brigam's (sic) Rifle Co'y 1 Oxford (9)  
Trumpour's Dragoons, 1 Lennox (10)  
Landry's do 1 Grenville (11)

(1) Niagara Frontier Guides (Provincial Dragoons).

(2) The 2nd Grenville Militia. The name of Richard D. Fraser is also connected with 1st Dundas Militia, of which his father, the Hon. Thos. Fraser, was Lt. Colonel. R. D. Fraser was elected in 1831 M. P. for Grenville; and his youngest son, Dr. Allan Fraser, of Brockville, served with great distinction in the Crimean War.

(3) 1st Leeds Militia. The Hon. Charles Jones (1781-1840) represented Leeds in the eighth (1821) and ninth (1825) Parliaments, and was subsequently called to the Legislative Council.

(4) Troop of Royal Provincial Artillery Drivers. Isaac Swayze (1751-1828) represented Lincoln in Parliament for twenty years.

(5) Capt. John McGregor subsequently on the Permanent Board for Upper Canada regarding Militia Pensions (1812-15).

(6) This was the first Lincoln Artillery, known also as Capt. Powell's Company of Artillery. Powell was captured at the taking of Fort George.

(7) Lt.-Col. William Caldwell, afterwards a Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, had been a captain and distinguished soldier in Butler's Rangers. His four sons all served in the Militia in the war of 1812-15.

(8) These were attached to the Engineer Department. James Robertson afterwards commanded the Company of Coloured Men; and was Adjutant of Militia in 1813.

(9) Lieutenant Bla Brewster Brigham.

(10) Capt. Paul Trumpour had been a Lieutenant in Delancey's Loyalists.

(11) “Landry” is doubtless an error. Capt. Herman Landon commanded a troop of Light Dragoons in the 1 Grenville Militia.



## Extracts from "Lossing's—War of 1812"

Sheaffe's reinforcements, with whom he marched from Fort George, consisted of almost 400 of the 41st Regt. under Capt. Derenzy, and about 300 militia. The latter consisted of the Flank Companies of the 1st Regt. of Lincoln Militia under Cap'ns J. Crooks and McEwen, the Flank Companies of the 4th Regt. of Lincoln Militia under Cap'ns Nallis and W. Crooks ; Capts. Hall's, Durand's and Applegarth's Companies of the 5th Regt. of Lincoln Militia ; Major Merritt's Yeomanry Corps, and a body of Swayzee's Militia Artillery under Cap'ns. Powell and Cameron.

Oct. 13th, 1812—"Brant and Jacobs commanded the Indians". General Sheaffe named almost every commissioned officer engaged in the battle as entitled to high praise. He specially commended Cap'n Holcroft, of the R. A. for his skilful and judicious use of the ordnance in his charge also Lt. Crowther for similar service. He gave credit to Cap'n Glegg, Brock's A.D.C., for great assistance ; also to Lt. Fowler, Asst. Dep. Qt.-M'r Gen., Lt. Kerr, of the Glengarry Fencibles, Lt.-Cols. Butler and Clarke, and Capts. Hall, Durand, Rowe, Applegarth, Jas. Crooks, Cookes, Robt. Hamilton, McEwen and Duncan Cameron, Lts. Richardson and Thos. Butler and Major Merritt of the Niagara Dragoons, were all highly spoken of. He added to the list of honor the names of Volunteers Shaw, Thomson and Jarvis.

### General Brock's Funeral

When General Sheaffe marched in triumph from Queenston to Newark, he took with him the body of the slain General Brock, which had been concealed in a house near where he fell. The march had a two-fold aspect. It was a triumphal and a funeral procession. (800 to 900 American prisoners of war). The following was the order of the procession:—1. Fort-Major Campbell. 2. 60 men of the 41st Regt. commanded by a Subaltern. 3. 60 of the militia, commanded by a Capt. 4. Two 6 pounder firing minute-guns. 5. Remaining Corps and detachments of the garrison, with whom about 200 Indians, in reverse order, forming a street through which the procession passed, extending from the Government house to the garrison. 6. Band of the 41st Regt. 7. Drums, covered with black cloth and muffled. 8. Late General's horse, fully caparisoned, led by 4 grooms. 9. Servants of the General. 10. The General's body-servant. 11. Surgeon Muirhead, Dr. Moore, Dr. Kerr and Staff Sergt. Thorn. 12. Rev. Mr. Addison. Then followed the body of Lieut.-Col. McDonell with the following gentlemen as pall-bearers ; Capt. A. Cameron, Lt. Robinson (late Chief Justice of Canada), J. Edwards, Lt. Jarvis, Lt. Ridout and Capt. Crooks. The chief mourner was the brother of the deceased. The body of General Brock followed, with the following pall-bearers :—Mr. James Coffin, Captains Vigoreaux, Derenzy, Dennis, Holcroft and Williams, Major Merritt, Lt.-Cols. Clarke and Butler and Col. Claus, supported by Brigade Major Evans and Capt. Glegg. The chief mourners were Maj.-Gen. Sheaffe, Ensign Coffin, Lt.-Col. Myers and Lt. Fowler. These were followed by the civil staff, friends of the deceased and the inhabitants.



Signature of Major Thomas Merritt from Certificate  
in the Archives at Ottawa









320602

Merritt, Thomas (1759-1842)  
Merritt, W.H.

Memoirs of Major Thomas Merritt.

Pamph  
HC.B  
M

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